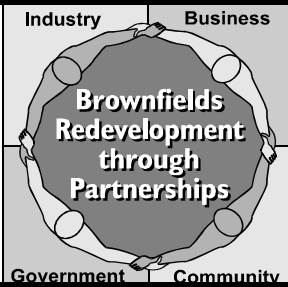


|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Union County, New Jersey</b><br/><b>Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot</b></p> <p>U. S. EPA, Region 2<br/>290 Broadway<br/>New York, NY</p> <p style="text-align: right;">October 2001</p> |  |
|--|---|

## Program Information

The EPA Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is an abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial or commercial facility where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived contamination. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 300 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, enabling localities to clarify environmental contamination issues in order to facilitate redevelopment. Pilot funds are for site assessment, reuse planning and related community involvement. EPA Region 2 provides direct support to the States, Tribes, counties, municipalities, and communities of New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands as they continue to seek new methods to promote site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

## I. Overview

In May 2000, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) selected Union County, New Jersey, as a Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot. Union County is located in northeast New Jersey, and has a population of nearly one-half million residents. The County comprises an area of 103.4 square miles with an estimated population of 493,000 and has 21 municipalities, consisting of five cities, eight townships, seven boroughs, and one town. Over the last four decades, rising energy, labor costs and currency inflation led manufacturers to move operations overseas. The result of these relocation activities has been the closure of key rail facilities and manufacturing operations, which have, in turn, become brownfields sites. These brownfields (an estimated 78 sites) are concentrated along the Raritan Valley Line, a cross-county rail corridor running through nine communities and connecting the county's eastern and western borders.

The Pilot will target the communities of Plainfield and Hillside, both state Urban Enterprise Zones (UEZ) where the poverty levels are 12.2 percent and 6 percent and unemployment is 9 percent and 6.6 percent, respectively. The Pilot will focus on six of the 33 brownfields identified in these communities.

The goal of the Union County Pilot is to establish a public/private partnership guided by a Brownfields Community Advisory Committee and a Coordinating Committee, that will facilitate the redevelopment of brownfields sites and revitalize the County's economy.

## II. Brownfields Pilot Progress

### Implementation Strategy

The Union County Brownfields Pilot is carried out under the direction of the County. A Coordinating Committee will be formed that will oversee the day-to-day operations of this initiative. The County also intends to use a portion of EPA funds to hire a part-time Project Coordinator.

A Brownfields Community Advisory Committee (distinct from the Coordinating Committee) will be established to elicit and maximize community input. A full Community Involvement Plan will be developed, that will include an environmental justice component that is specific to reaching under-represented populations, such as minority groups, public housing residents, and bilingual families.

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conduct an area-wide environmental characterization of Raritan Valley Line brownfields
- Prioritize brownfields sites for assessment
- Perform environmental assessments on six sites, three in Hillside and three in Plainfield
- Convene the Brownfields Community Advisory Committee to maximize community input throughout the redevelopment process
- Form a Coordinating Committee to oversee Pilot activities
- Establish a community-driven environmental justice plan as a part of a larger community involvement plan
- Develop site cleanup plans

### **Community Involvement**

The Gateway Institute of Kean University, who is already under contract with the County, will facilitate a public outreach strategy to educate community residents in the target areas. Activities will include community forums, interviews with key community leaders and activists, public presentations, and a media campaign.

It is intended that the Union County Brownfields Community Advisory Council will serve as the key vehicle to achieve the outreach objectives. The Council will consist of local residents, business persons, and relevant stakeholders at the county and municipal level who have an interest in restoring target sites. The County will also facilitate focus groups in order to elicit vital qualitative data relevant to the project. The County will then summarize the outcomes and discussions of these focus groups in a report format for presentation to the Advisory Council.

## **III. Brownfield Site Activities**

### **Site Inventory**

The County has identified up to 78 brownfield sites within its boundaries.

### **Site Selection**

The County and the Community Advisory Committee will develop an evaluation/scoring system to rank and prioritize sites for reuse. Scoring variables will include, but are not limited to the following: size, ownership, location, assessed value, calculated market value, tax status, potential use, level of contamination, costs for remediation, fiscal analysis (remediation costs versus financial impact of reuse), and, if applicable, stage of clean-up. Sites will be selected based on their score.

### **Site Assessment and Reuse Planning**

The County intends to assess and develop six sites within the two communities of Hillside and Plainfield (three in each community).

#### IV. Measures of Success

##### Properties Estimated in Brownfields Pilot Areas: NR

For the entire Pilot area, the number of properties/parcels which have been identified by the Pilot as brownfields. The Pilot area includes the entire jurisdiction of the Pilot (e.g., the entire City of Chicago or the State of Minnesota), not just the specific area(s) that the Pilot has defined as target areas.

##### Properties Reported to be Contained in Pilot Inventories: 78

For the entire Pilot area, the number of properties/parcels which have been included in an inventory of brownfields properties/parcels. Types of brownfields inventories include: lists, spreadsheets, and databases (geographic information systems or other forms). These inventories may include lists such as a foreclosure list of abandoned industrial sites, a state list of no-further actions sites, etc.

##### Properties Reported to be Targeted by Pilot: 6

For the entire Pilot area, the number of brownfields properties/parcels the Pilot reports it is “targeting”, or at which the Pilot says it will conduct, is conducting, or has conducted activities such as assessment, cleanup planning, facilitation of redevelopment, community outreach, etc.

#### V. Non-Site Specific Funding Leveraged

Funding that has been leveraged under the pilot program, but cannot be attributed to any one site.

##### A. Non-Site Specific Funding Leveraged for Assessment

Funded by: ☐ Local (City) ☐ Local (County) ☐ Private ☐ State ☐ Other Federal

Amount Funded: \$ 225,000

Additional information concerning funding: Funding comes from the County, \$170,000, Hillside, \$7,500, Plainfield, \$7,500 and from the private funding of Gateway, \$40,000.

##### B. Non-Site Specific Funding Leveraged for Cleanup

Funded by: ☐ Local (City) ☐ Local (County) ☐ Private ☐ State ☐ Other Federal

Amount Funded: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information concerning funding:

##### C. Non-Site Specific Funding Leveraged for Redevelopment

Funded by: ☐ Local (City) ☐ Local (County) ☐ Private ☐ State ☐ Other Federal

Amount Funded: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information concerning funding:

#### VI. Current Activities

The Pilot will focus on six of the 33 brownfields in the communities of Hillside and Plainfield.

## **VII. Contact Information**

### Pilot Contact

Name: Mr. Richard S. Muller  
Title: Supervising Planner  
Organization: Union County Administration Building  
Address: Elizabethtown Plaza  
Elizabeth, New Jersey 07207  
Phone: (908) 527- 4200  
Fax: (908) 527- 4715  
Email: rmuller@unioncountynj.org

### EPA Contact

Name: Schenine Mitchell  
Title: Brownfields Project Manager  
Organization: U.S. EPA Region 2  
Address: 290 Broadway, Floor 18  
New York, NY 10007  
Phone: (212) 637- 3283  
Fax: (212) 637- 4360  
Email: mitchell.schenine@epa.gov

For more information on EPA's Brownfields Initiative visit EPA's website at:

National Website <http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/bf>

Regional Website <http://www.epa.gov/r02earth/superfnd/brownfld/bfmainpg.htm>